

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6320

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, January 23, 2002

Title: An act relating to voter registration applications.

Brief Description: Regulating voter registration applications.

Sponsors: Senators Gardner, McCaslin, Horn, T. Sheldon, Winsley and Oke; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 1/17/02, 1/23/02 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6320 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Gardner, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Hale, Haugen, Keiser, Kline, McCaslin, T. Sheldon and Swecker.

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: A person or organization collecting voter registration applications must transmit the forms to the secretary of state or a designee at least once weekly.

Summary of Substitute Bill: All voter registration applications distributed within Washington State by any person, organization, or association must contain only the office of the Secretary of State or the appropriate county auditor as the return address. Persons printing voter registration forms are prohibited from including advertising of any kind, and/or statements advocating or opposing candidates, ballot measures, or political positions, as a part of the voter registration application. Persons distributing voter registration forms are prohibited from using a postal permit to pay the postage for the individual return of voter registration forms. Persons or organizations collecting voter registration applications have a responsibility to protect the privacy of persons whom they are assisting with voter registration. Voter registration forms that have been signed by a prospective voter may not be copied, nor may the information contained in the application be recorded before official processing by county or state voter registration officials.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Persons distributing voter registration forms can use a postal meter to pay the postage for the individual return of voter registration forms.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Voter privacy is assured by returning registration forms only to the Secretary of State or county auditor. The problems with the return of voter registration applications due to exhausted postal permits are eliminated.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Sam Reed, Dean Logan, David Elliot, Secretary of State's Office.